A Proposed Strategy for
Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program Technical Assistance
August 10, 2004

There are many drivers that combine to make energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies a viable option for meeting state and community energy needs – environmental benefits, cost savings, clean air regulatory requirements, energy security, economic development, climate concerns, and others. Oftentimes, though, decision makers do not possess the requisite motivation and knowledge to implement such technologies, making the ability to access expert assistance crucial for success.

As a result of this need and our reputation as experts in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy, DOE has found technical assistance in the implementation of advanced energy technologies and practices to be one of our most consistently valued services. To remain the leader in this area, it is imperative that we continue to look critically at how we deliver technical assistance to ensure that we are meeting our customers' needs as effectively as possible.

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) is in the process of developing a Technology Deployment Strategy that will be completed by the 4th quarter 2004. The Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program (WIP) is conducting a reevaluation of its' program delivery processes at this time both to serve as a contributor to the overall deployment strategy, and to increase our program effectiveness and impact. A key part of this work is improving the delivery of technical assistance. A WIP technical assistance team has analyzed current practices in technical assistance and has framed a strategy for improvement. The charge of the team was to focus on four program areas: Clean Cities, Rebuild America, Building Energy Codes, and the State Technical Assistance Pilot (TAP), while assuring that a wide range of EERE programs could be accommodated in the future.

Technical assistance refers to the specialized technology, policy, planning, or financing assistance that is delivered to overcome market or action barriers. Successful technical assistance involves both products, such as printed guides and software tools, and services which involve direct expert intervention. For the purposes of this report, we have focused on the service component of TA and the process for accessing and coordinating the expertise.

The Problem

The technical assistance team has concluded that the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program has a variety of activities that deliver activity specific technical assistance services very well. But it does not have an overall system for delivering technical assistance to its customers. Hence, customers must contact each of the activities separately to obtain assistance. It is perceived as being a disparate set of deployment activities. Each activity delivers its technical assistance services and utilizes

the regional offices in its own unique way, and there is little or no relationship or connection between them.

WIP has had difficulty responding to customers with broad multi-sector or multi-technology needs. It aggregates and customizes technical assistance from various activities for a customer's needs on an ad hoc basis. Its procedures and activities are not set up to provide components to an integrated package for multi-sector or multi-technology customer needs. Criteria, established to assure the best use of limited federal funds for specific technical assistance varies from one WIP activity to another, to respond to different missions. This sometimes requires customers to satisfy extensive administrative requirements to obtain technical assistant services from multiple WIP programs, which has deterred some customers from seeking this assistance. WIP's activities are also not organized to identify and offer a spectrum of other WIP technical assistance while delivering its narrowly focused WIP technical assistance.

WIP currently has no mechanism for optimizing technical assistance services that are inherently crosscutting. Areas such as EERE/air quality integration do not always get adequate focus since no one program covers the issue completely.

WIP's multiple mechanisms for delivering technical assistance may not be learning from each other about their technical assistance improvements and problems. There are a number of best practices that have potential for use across WIP technical assistance activities. Lessons learned may not be shared across technical assistance activities.

It is difficult for WIP to handle technical assistance requests that span between WIP activities, and between WIP and other EERE Programs. Mechanisms for working between programs are handled as unique situations and require extra time and effort to formulate. WIP has no mechanism to identify and assess whether to develop responses to its customer's unmet needs for technical assistance that falls between two programs.

Finally, WIP's mechanisms for delivering technical assistance are not well structured to respond to EERE technical assistance needs that fall outside of WIP's current purview. WIP customer's needs for other EERE technical assistance are handled on an ad hoc basis and often depend on the capabilities and knowledge of individuals.

Objectives

The objective is to develop an integrated structure for delivering WIP technical assistance services that will maintain the high quality of technical assistance delivered to its current customers while improving its delivery of technical assistance in other ways to new and existing customers. This includes:

- Developing a system to better service customers with broad multi-sector or multi-technology needs.
- Developing a system that can incorporate a broader network of resources and therefore respond to EERE technical assistance needs that fall outside of WIP's current purview.

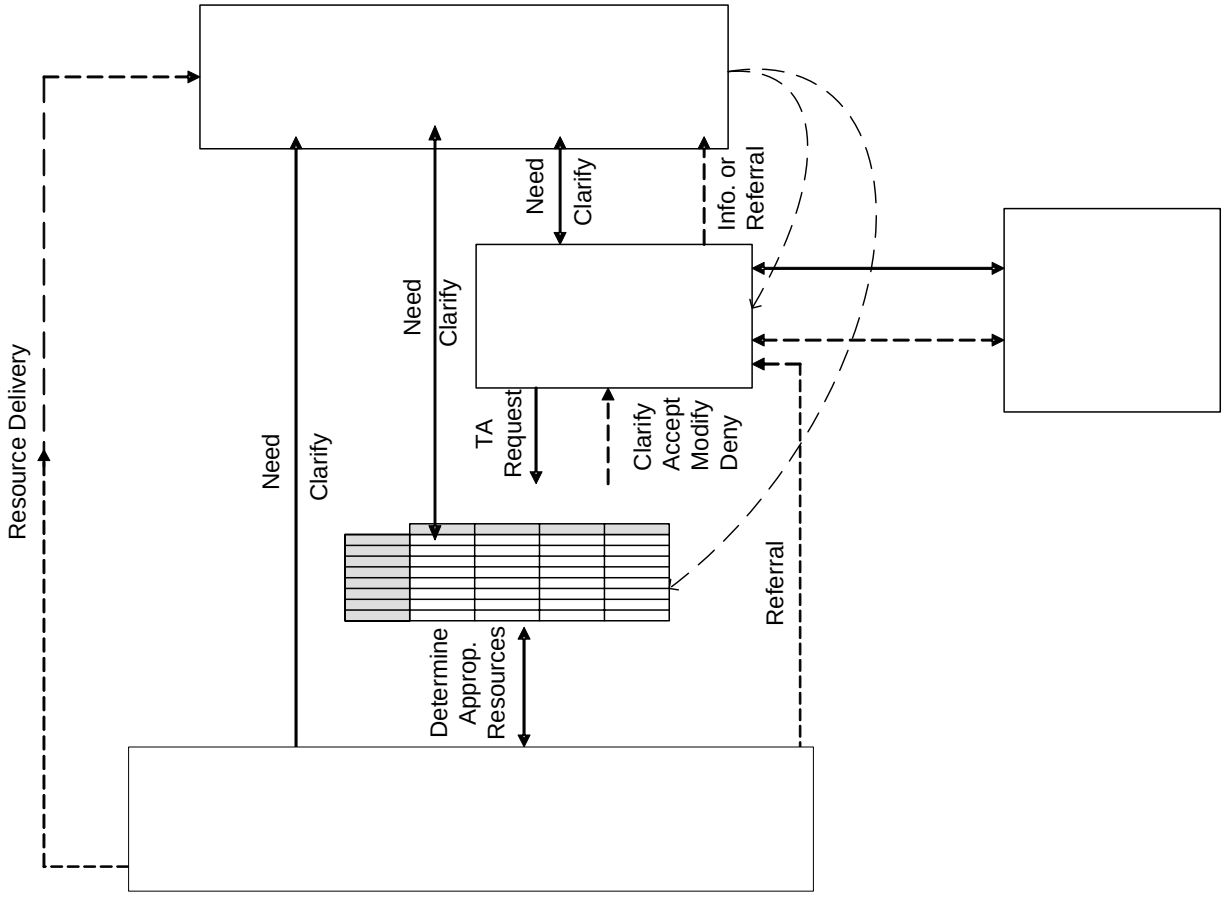
- Strengthening technical assistance elements that occur in each of a variety of its activities.
- Developing a system for taking advantage of best practices that have potential for use across WIP technical assistance activities.
- Developing a system for responding to technical assistance requests that span between WIP activities, and to assess whether to develop responses to its customer's unmet needs for technical assistance that falls between programs.

Customer Groups and TA Areas for the Four Targeted Programs

	Customer Groups	TA areas
Clean Cities	Fleet managers (schools, transit, municipal, delivery, and airports), equipment/fuel providers, state and local government	Alt fuel vehicles and infrastructure. Expanding to include blends, idle reduction, hybrids, and fuel economy.
Rebuild America	Over 700 Community partnerships, facility managers, engineers and architects (K-12 schools, colleges and universities, state and local governments, commercial buildings, multifamily housing), State Energy Offices	Pre-project planning Project definition Design/Building Evaluation Contracts and financing Technologies and system design Construction Building Commissioning Facilities management Marketing and Communications Energy Technical Seminars Professional Development Workshops Strategic planning
Building Energy Codes	State and local governments, Federal agencies, designers (architects, engineers, lighting designers), builders, code officals, model code organizations, professional societies of designers, product manufacturers and trade associations, building owners and managers, and those responsible for educating the above.	Building energy codes for new and existing buildings, including their adoption, updating, implementation, compliance with, enforcement, advocacy of, and education about. Related beyond code information.
State TAP	State Energy Offices	System benefits charges or other rate-payer funded utility efficiency and renewable programs, Renewable or efficiency portfolio standards, Use of clean energy technologies to help states and localities address air emissions, Use of renewable energy on public lands

Toward a Unified Model

After analyzing each of the target program's methods for delivering technical assistance, the team was able to find enough common features to propose a preliminary unified model.



We have concluded that our technical assistance system must be flexible enough to accommodate customers that will come with a broad spectrum of needs and in a variety of ways. Our customers will come for technical assistance with needs ranging in scope from national to local and will range from broad multi-program, multi-technologies (portfolio) needs to very narrow subject and technology needs. For some customers it will be their first time or the first time for a different need, while others will be involved on a continuing basis. Some customers will come as a result of their own initiated search and others will come through referrals. Our customers will come through one of a variety of portals, from contact with headquarters management or staff, to a designated advertised central point, a regional office, a state, a national laboratory, or a contractor. The portal for a particular assistance need may also be from within, due to a broader need identified while a customer is obtaining assistance in another area.

Single–
Technica

For example, a customer has a problem in a specific technology area. A new community is in the process of adopting building codes, and is seeking testimony at their regulatory hearing about inclusion of a building energy code. Whether the customer entered through a call to WIP, to their regional office, a contractor (the Building Codes Assistance Project), or a query to www.energycodes.gov, the model would direct the customer to the point where the codes activity would clarify the request and make a determination as to whether the customer was qualified to receive this type of assistance. In this case, staff at headquarters, in the responsible regional office, and state would make the initial qualification decision. (In the case of codes, WIP provides technical assistance to states, and a decision as to whether to support a community is important. Here we assume the community is in a home rule state with local code prerogatives.) A positive qualification would move the query to the point in the model where resources are allocated. A cost estimate would be made, approved by headquarters and regional office staff, and resources would be made available from the codes activity (a specific portion of the matrix of WIP resources).

In this example, there would be no need for explicit bundling of resources. Other opportunities with this customer would be explored later. Qualification decisions would not involve other WIP activities, regions, or states. Had this query instead involved other assistance from the Clean Cities activities, the qualification process would have been more extensive and may or may not have involved the state.

In still another example, a customer with a detailed problem in a specific technology area, is already qualified to receive technical assistance. A state which has recently upgraded its code based on a model code has a series of queries about the new requirements for duct insulation. As this is a state and already qualified for technical assistance, in the model this query would skip the bundling assistance and qualification filter, use a portal designated for those users (www.energycodes.gov).

A direct access to resources for qualified customers in this model does not create a back door, but rather a custom door. Notification of decisions, and of assistance to be rendered, may be passed back to the regional office, or any other point of contact or broker, for delivery, to reinforce the contact with the customer.

Technical Assistance Matrix

	Buildings			Transportation			Crosscutting			Future Areas
	Rebuild America $$	Codes $$	Other $$	Clean Cities $$	Other $$	Other $$	$$	$$	$$	Power / Industrial
NREL	Bob			**George - Technical POC**			Ralph			
LBNL	Jim			John			Gene			
ORNL	Sally			Theresa			**Dave - Technical POC**			
PNNL	**Robert - Technical POC**			Elizabeth			Paul			
Sandia				Bill						
INL	Susan									
Other Lab										
Contractor 1	Molly									
Contractor 2				Tom						
Contractor 3							Richard			
Business Partner 1	Edward									
Business Partner 2										
Association 1	Laura									
Association 2							Ron			
Other				Chris						
Topic Areas:	Residential, Commercial, Building Energy Codes			Vehicle operations, Infrastructure, Opportunity evaluation			EERE/Air Quality Integration, Strategic planning, financing			Renewables, CHP, DER

**All names/rosters/roles are for illustration only

The technical assistance matrix represents a common mechanism for accessing formal technical assistance services across multiple sectors. WIP will use this matrix to assign approved technical assistance requests to the organization(s) and individuals within that organization(s) that are best qualified to respond to the request. One axis of this matrix will present common technical assistance topics in three broad areas: buildings, transportation, and crosscutting (addressing requests and services that are not sector specific or that cover several sectors, such as air quality). The technical assistance service providers will be presented along the other axis of the matrix.

For each provider of a specific technical assistance topic, a point of contact will be placed in the matrix cell. For a given type of technical assistance, there may be multiple potential providers. Each provider will offer different levels and types of service. For example, national labs will provide highly technical and cutting edge assistance (including tech transfer from DOE R&D programs) not available through contractors and consultants. In addition to labs and contractors, the matrix will also identify business partners, non-profit associations, states, other federal programs, universities, utilities, and peers that can offer technical assistance for a given topic. This flexibility will allow us to provide the most cost-effective assistance wherever possible to qualified applicants.

A technical coordinator (point of contact) will be designated at one of the providers for each of the 3 topics listed under the buildings, transportation, and crosscutting categories. The technical coordinators will assist the customer in clarifying their needs and assigning specific providers to specific requests. Multiple providers may support one request if needed. The technical coordinators will network with all providers of the technical assistance topic to assure optimum assignments for services. For multi-sector needs, the

technical coordinators will collaborate to put together a complete scope of work to meet the customer's request depending upon availability of funds. The coordinator will assist in monitoring and disseminating results of technical assistance, while also identifying needs for new tools, products, and services to address common needs for that topic.

We wish to enable requests that require less than $5,000 to fulfill (or another appropriate nominal amount, TBD) to be automatically approved if they meet the stated criteria. Requests that require more than $5,000 to fulfill will require specific authorization. The process for this authorization will be developed in conjunction with HQ and RO staff to ensure timely and equitable distribution of resources.

Given that TA requests will come from a variety of entry points, we envision a robust IT system that will allow all interested parties to communicate and track the requests. Until a system can be properly designed and optimized, we will utilize simpler methods for communication such as email and listservs.

Roles

The model as illustrated is not intended to fully define the roles of all technical assistance delivery participants. We understand that actual brokering relationships and assistance protocols will vary across regions and states depending on resources and preferences. An expanded discussion of the unique role of states is included in the appendix. For this interim report, we simply wish to illustrate the broad set of improvements envisioned:

- A simple common process for accessing and delivering TA
- An efficient and transparent TA mechanism
- Promoting exchange of expertise and best practices across program boundaries
- Promoting development of services that will benefit multiple programs

Selection Criteria

Because of successful program outreach and increased EERE technology adoption, a reality of technical assistance delivery is that demand exceeds supply. Programs cannot afford to deliver valuable formal TA services to everyone who wants them. Therefore each program has placed a variety of criteria on each request/requestor to ensure that our limited resources are utilized as effectively and efficiently as possible. One of the tasks for this team has been to analyze existing program criteria and propose a common set that meets program needs while enabling the larger unified model. Our initial common selection criteria appear below. For reference, the current criteria in place for the four target programs are shown in the appendix.

Proposed Unified Selection Criteria

1. For programs with partnership or coalition membership requirements, is the request from a current partner/coalition? (phase I)
2. Can this need be met with a referral to other readily available technical resources?
3. Is the request and/or problem clearly defined and does it fit within the scope of WIP TA activities?

4. Will TA have significant, sustainable impact--energy savings, environmental benefits?
5. Will TA results be replicable to others in applicable market sector(s)?
6. Will the project support WIP program goals and is it consistent with national, regional, state or local strategic planning?
7. Has the requestor received prior assistance; if so, how much, how recently, and was it utilized effectively?
8. Does WIP have necessary expertise and resources to provide the requested TA?
9. Is the requestor contributing funding and/or making commitments of in-kind resources and capabilities to the project?
10. Does the requestor agree to share information on project activities and results with others?
11. Are there any critical Safety or Security concerns or issues related to the request for TA?
12. Does the requestor have an effective plan for involving key stakeholders and partners in implementation of this project?

Phased Implementation
To ensure a seamless transition, WIP plans to introduce the proposed common approach in at least two phases. Key milestones include:

Phase I – FY 05
- Unified TA model implemented for target programs - Rebuild America, Clean Cities, Building Energy Codes, State TAP.
- Lessons learned from increased collaboration

Phase II – FY 06
- Pilot efforts in selected regions to incorporate additional EERE services (expanded matrix)
- Pilot efforts in selected regions to incorporate new customers outside of the initial target programs

TA Team Schedule
- April 26, 2004 — TA team kickoff, begin weekly information gathering meetings
- June 16-17, 2004 — Offsite meeting conducted to synthesize program information and lessons learned
- July 6, 2004 — First Interim Report posted on web for comment
- July 16, 2004 — First report comments due
- August 9, 2004 — Second Interim Report posted on web for comment
- August 27, 2004 — Second report comments due
- September 3, 2004 — Team briefs DAS for Technology Development on final recommendations

Next Steps
Informed by stakeholder feedback, the team will continue to add clarity and detail to the proposed unified model. We will be engaging our regional offices, state energy offices, current customers, and other stakeholders in clarifying appropriate roles relative to the model, with the understanding that preferences may vary region to region and state to state. These discussions will then inform our request tracking protocols, information technology needs and other important logistical matters. Additionally, we will engage our National Laboratories, private business partners, and other key service providers in revising the technical assistance matrix to identify points of contact, further refine areas of expertise, and optimize our internal coordination.

Appendix

Appendix A
Stakeholder Consultation and Feedback

Ground Rules

The team recognizes that many of our key customers and stakeholders rely on our technical assistance services as we provide them now, and therefore are sensitive to any changes we might make. To that end, we have established a series of ground rules to guide our recommendations.

1. We will replicate best practices across all the programs and take care not to "throw the baby out with the bathwater."
2. We will maintain a dedicated capability in each sector (buildings, transportation, policy, etc.) that will allow us to continue focusing on unique needs.
3. We will make every effort not to disrupt or compromise existing technical assistance services provided to customers.
4. We are committed to an open process. At every stage, we will submit our progress and recommendations for wide review by key stakeholders and customers.

Early stakeholder feedback

These observations have been confirmed by the feedback we have received from customers and program staff that serve those customers:

- Separate technical assistance processes make accessing resources from multiple programs difficult and inefficient for broad-need customers and situations (the so-called salesman of the week problem).
- We need a flexible mechanism to address topics that fall outside the scope of current programs and that can adapt to key market drivers.
- Regional offices that attempt to bundle resources for certain customers or situations do so despite technical assistance processes, rather than being enabled by them.
- There is no organized way to capture best practices across programs or to promote coordination when beneficial for the customer.
- Many stakeholders in niche markets, e.g. alternative fuels, have responded that their current technical assistance is highly valued.

Interim report comments and other feedback

We received valuable feedback on our first interim report from a variety of stakeholders. An email account has been established to receive comments at tafeedback@ee.doe.gov. All comments to date have been compiled and are available on our project site at http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/tafeedback.html.

Appendix B
Technical Assistance Team

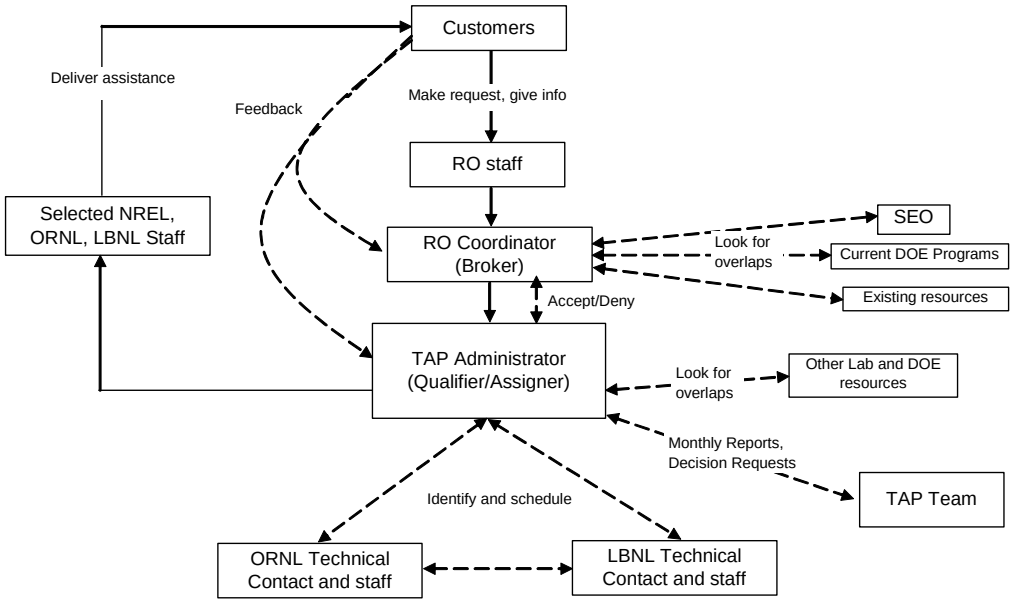
Technical Assistance Team

To address these issues, WIP has convened a team with experience in every aspect of technical assistance delivery. The team consists of key personnel from Headquarters, the EERE Regional Offices, National Labs, the State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB), and implementation contractors. Our charge is to establish a single, flexible technical assistance delivery mechanism that effectively meets the needs of EERE customers and stakeholders. Although the team hopes to enable a wide range of EERE programs to participate, our initial focus has been on four program areas: Clean Cities, Rebuild America, Building Energy Codes, and the State Technical Assistance Pilot (TAP).

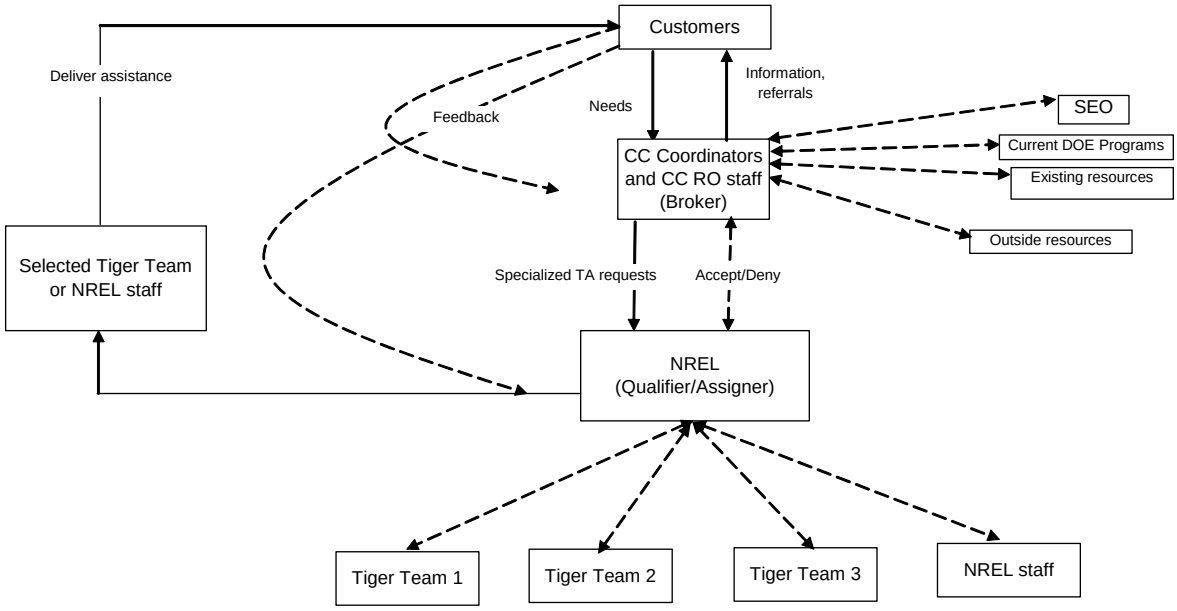
Appendix C
Models of Existing Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program Activities

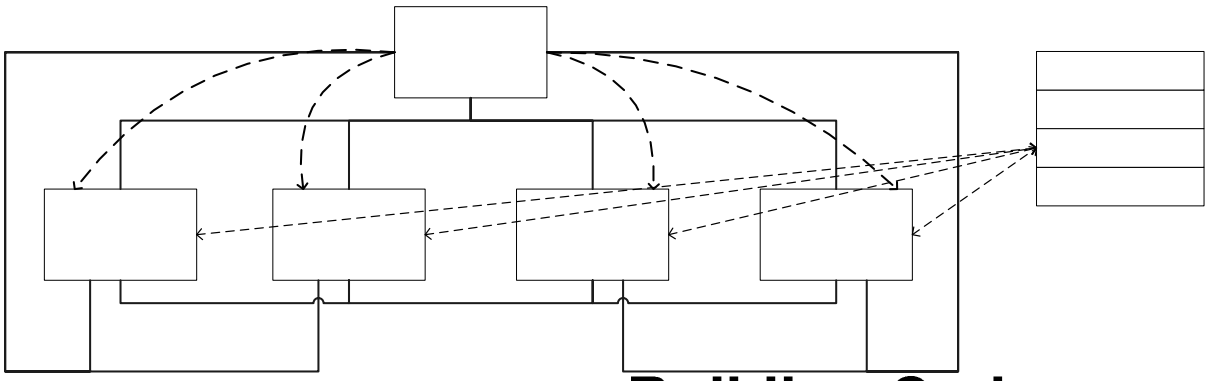
The following diagrams represent models of the subject WIP programs.

Technical Assistance Pilot (TAP)



Clean Cities





Building Codes

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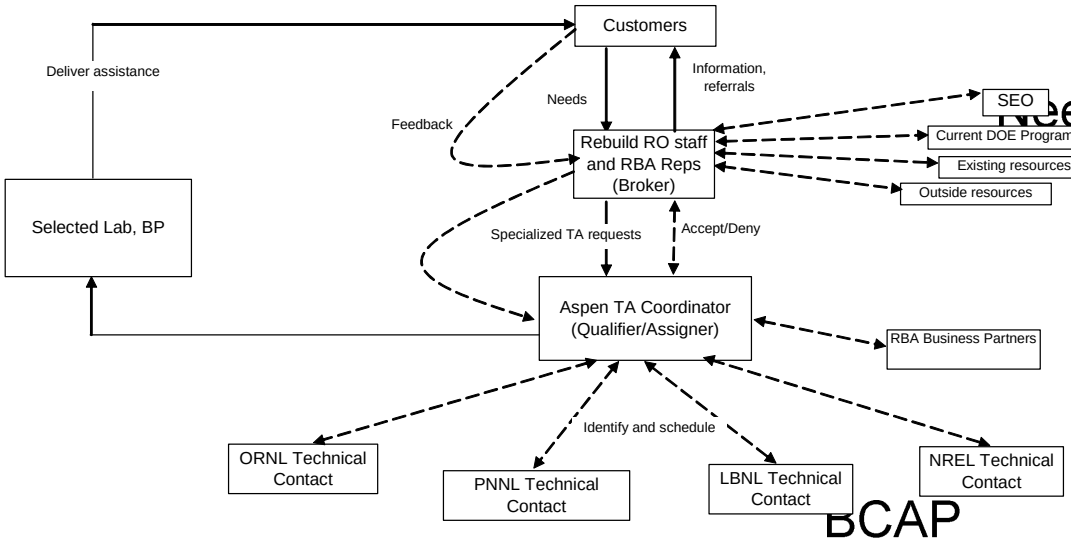
Rebuild America



BCAP

Appendix D
Role of the State Energy Office

The Unified TA model gives some flexibility on who should serve as the broker. The broker role could be played by SEOs or regional offices (ROs). A broker is defined in this case, as the primary point of contact between EERE and the customer. The broker is the face of EERE with the customer, determining customer needs and interests. The broker generally knows the EERE resources available and may advise the customer on where to procure the resources or begin the procurement process themselves.

Resources are not equal across all states. Some states have large staffs while some are two or three person operations. Because of this difference, the states should be given the opportunity to "opt-in" or "opt–out" of the broker role.

This role would be discussed by each SEO and respective RO to describe and reach agreement on the role the state wants to play in the Unified TA Model. This individualized agreement would be documented in a Memorandum of Understanding. ROs will meet with each state/territory to agree upon their desired level of involvement in the TA function. The MOU will capture the level of desired state involvement.

As examples, we see at least three levels of possible state involvement in the Unified TA process. The SEO would ultimately decide the level at which it wanted to participate.

1. Any integrated TA delivery would begin with the SEO. The SEO would become the gateway for that state into EERE resources and the SEO would serve as broker of Federal and state resources to its customers. The RO would support the state as necessary.

2. TA delivery would begin with the RO being broker with the state being brought in as a full partner in approaching or working with the customer.

3. The SEO opts out of the broker role and only wants to be informed of any EERE activity within the state.

There may be other intermediate levels but in any case the SEO and RO would work together to describe and design the broker role for that individual state.